

# Community Preservation Committee Town of Arlington

## CPA Funding – FY2020 Final Application

One (1) electronic copy and three (3) hard copies of the completed application must be submitted to the CPAC **no later than 4 p.m. on December 10, 2018** in order to be considered for advancement to the final application stage, with the electronic copy sent to AFidalgo@town.arlington.ma.us and the hard copies to:

Community Preservation Committee c/o Amy Fidalgo  
Town of Arlington, 730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476

Applications will be date stamped and assigned control numbers in the order that the hard copies are received. This PDF form may be completed on a computer using Adobe Reader.

### 1. General Information

Project Title: Whittemore Robbins Cottage Exterior Rehabilitaiton  
Applicant/Contact: Arlington Department of Health and Human Services/Christine Bongiorno  
Organization: Town of Arlington, Department of Health and Human Services  
Mailing Address: 27 Maple Street, Arlington, MA 02476

Telephone: 781-316-3170 E-mail: cbongiorno@town.arlington.ma.us

### 2. CPA Eligibility (refer to the chart on page A-4)

CPA Category (select one):

☐ Community Housing ☒ Historic Preservation ☐ Open Space ☐ Recreation

CPA Purpose (select one):

☐ Acquisition ☐ Creation ☐ Preservation ☐ Support ☒ Rehabilitation & Restoration

### 3. Budget

Amount Requested: \$154,000 Total Project Cost: \$154,000

Signature Christine Bongiorno Date 12/10/18

**Please answer and document all questions on the following page**

**Community Preservation Committee  
Request for Funding  
Rehabilitation of the Whittemore-Robbins Cottage Exterior**

**1. Goals**

The Arlington Department of Health and Human Services seeks \$154,000 for the rehabilitation of the exterior of the Whittemore Robbins Cottage. The goal of the funding request for the Whittemore Robbins Cottage (Cottage) is to prevent further deterioration and rehabilitate the historic building. This property is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Properties, both as an individual property (ARL.601, 7/18/1974), and as part of the Arlington Center Historic District (National Register, 9/2/1985).

The Cottage is one of three structures included within the Whittemore Robbins Estate which was built in the early 1800s. In 1890, the buildings were moved to their present location to make space for the Robbins Library and in 1931 the Whittemore Robbins Estate was given to the Town by the Robbins Family. In 1997, the Town of Arlington completed the rehabilitation of the main Whittemore Robbins mansion which houses the Arlington Youth Counseling Center and is rented during off hours for events. In 2017, the Whittemore Robbins Carriage House exterior was rehabilitated through CPA funding and this proposal aims to perform similar work on the adjacent Cottage. This proposal seeks to cover the cost of rehabilitating the exterior of the building in FY20. Through the Arlington Capital Budget process, the Department will be seeking remaining funds to renovate the interior of the building which will include the creation of 6 offices that will be used to address the growing need for counseling space for the Arlington Youth Counseling Center as well as two accessible, restrooms that will be made available for use during events that will be held in the garden area as well as the adjacent Carriage House.

Attachment 1 is a circa 1890 photograph of the Whittemore-Robbins estate, including the Cottage. The Cottage, located behind the Whittemore-Robbins House and adjacent to the Whittemore-Robbins Carriage House, consists of a two level residential structure with a rubble stone basement. Currently, the structure is vacant but over the past number of decades housed the care takers of the property.

The Whittemore Robbins mansion exhibits the scale, proportion, dignity, and decoration of the highest Federal-style architecture. The house, along with the Carriage House and Cottage, represents one of the few intact estates that were built in Arlington during the 1800s. The complex is a visual reminder of both the commercial prosperity of early Arlington and the critical role that the Robbins family played in the development of a civic center for Arlington.

However, a lack of maintenance has resulted in deterioration of this historic property. Attachment 3 contains the report from structural engineer, MacLeod Consulting, which outlines the current deficiencies and work required to rehabilitate the Cottage.

This funding request meets the criteria established in the Community Preservation Fund Allowable Spending Purposes (G.L. c. 44B, § 5) for historic rehabilitation. All work proposed will meet the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (codified in 36 CFR 67 for use in the Federal Historical Tax Incentives program).

## **2. Community Need**

There are three community needs for this project: 1) rehabilitation of the historic structure; 2) public safety; and 3) improvement of the aesthetics of the area.

The Whittemore Robbins House, along with the Carriage House and Cottage, represent some of the earliest Arlington buildings on the Civic Block and one of a few remaining intact estates. Caira Robbins (1866-1939) and her sister, Ida, gave the house and the two out buildings to the Town in 1931. When Ida died in 1947, she left the bulk of her estate to the Town.

Given the level of deterioration of the structure, there is significant concern regarding the continued use of the space. As a town resource, the long term goal of converting the space to offices will ensure that the space will be a priority for decades into the future.

Further, the Whittemore Robbins House is used on weekends for events, such as weddings, and the accessory structures contribute to the appeal of the house itself. Rehabilitating and maintaining and building will make a significant improvement in the area. The events generate revenue for the Town and offset maintenance and other routine expenses for the main house and the landscaping around the three buildings.

## **3. Community Support**

Included with this application are letters of support in Attachment 2. Additional letters of support will be sent directly to the CPA Committee.

## **4. Project Documentation**

As previously identified, Attachment 3 contains the structural assessment completed by MacLeod Consulting. The structural assessment identifies the current building deficiencies.

## **5. Timeline**

The timeline for the project is as follows:

<b>Task</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Form Rehabilitation Committee	June 2019
Appropriation of Funds	July 2019
Publish RFP for Consultants	July 2019
Engage Consultants	August 2019
Advertise for Construction Bids	October 2019
Contractor Selection/Contract Execution	November 2019
Construction Begins	December 2019
Completion of Work	June 2020

## **6. Credentials**

All work will be completed by qualified, licensed contractors. Work will be overseen by appropriate Town departments. The Town is experienced in construction bidding, contracts, and completion of construction projects. Additionally, the team assembled to manage this project has demonstrated experience through the Carriage House rehabilitation in 2017 as one of the first funded CPA projects.

## **7. Budget**

The budget for this project is as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Construction	\$110,000
Architectural/Engineering Fees	\$11,000
Preservation Consultant	\$5,500
Owner's Contingency (25%)	\$27,500
Total Budget	\$154,000

The construction budget was assembled by Architect, Bill Sterling of Sterling and Associates, Steve Nesterak, Arlington Facilities Director with additional fees included for a preservation consultant and architect/engineer as was done in the previous project at the Carriage House. Additionally, a 25% contingency was included to address any additional issues that may come up in addition to issues that were included in the MacLeod report that were unknown at initial inspection.

## **8. Other Funding**

The Town does not have other funding for this proposed project. There will be funding included in the Arlington Capital Budget in FY21 to perform the interior renovation of the space which will include the offices as well as restrooms. The amount included in the capital plan is \$515,000

## **9. Maintenance**

Routine maintenance will be expensed from the Town's event account.

## **10. Impact on Town Budget**

Once the exterior of the building is rehabilitated, the town capital budget process will support the interior renovations in FY21 to build out six offices for the Arlington Youth Counseling Center as well as restrooms that will be available for events held at the Carriage House and within the garden. Maintenance of the space after the interior renovation will occur through Town of Arlington budgets.

## **Additional Information**

### **1. Control of Site**

The Whittemore Robbins House, Whittemore Cottage and Carriage House were given to the Town by the Robbins Family in 1931. The Town has maintained ownership of the three properties since that time. The Arlington Historical Commission and the Department of Health and Human Services have oversight of the buildings.

### **2. Deed Restrictions**

N/A

**3. Acquisitions**

N/A

**4. Feasibility**

There are no known barriers to moving forward with this project.

**5. Hazardous Materials**

There is a high likelihood that the exterior paint contains lead. The Town will ensure that any disturbance of the exterior will meet Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and EPA guidelines. The Town is not aware of any other potential hazardous materials at the Carriage House.

**6. Permitting**

Notification of the intent to do this work will be provided to the Historical Commission as required. The selected contractor will obtain the appropriate building permits as required to complete the work. Project oversight, including the permitting process will be the responsibility of the project committee and town staff as required.

**7. Environmental Concerns**

There is a high likelihood that the exterior paint contains lead. Work on the exterior will meet Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and EPA guidelines. There are no wetland or floodplain areas in the vicinity of the proposed project.

**8. Professional Standards**

All construction will meet the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and performed to professional standards. The Committee that will oversee the project includes individuals who are committed to improving town resources and who have demonstrated experience through the rehabilitation project in 2017 at the Whittemore Robbins Carriage House as shown in Attachment 5.

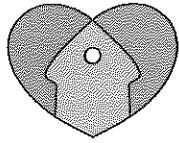
**Attachment 1. Circa 1890 photo of the Whittemore  
Robbins**





## **Attachment 2. Letters of Support**





**AYCC**  
Arlington Youth  
Counseling Center

670R Massachusetts Avenue  
Arlington, MA 02476  
781-316-3255  
[www.ayccma.org](http://www.ayccma.org)

December 10, 2018

Community Preservation Committee  
730 Massachusetts Avenue  
Arlington, MA 02476

Dear Committee Members:

I write this letter in support of the Department of Health and Human Services application for CPA funding to rehabilitate the exterior of the historic Whittemore Robbins Cottage. As the Director of the Arlington Youth Counseling Center, the community based mental health counseling center housed in the historic Whittemore Robbins House, I have the unique privilege to serve as the onsite day to day manager of this historic resource. We are so fortunate to have been gifted these properties as a community and I am eager to continue to honor the generosity of the Robbins Family by continuing to provide support to Arlington's youth and families in need through the eventual conversion of the building into additional counseling offices. The application for the exterior rehabilitation will be the first step in making this plan a reality.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need additional information regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Colleen Leger  
Director of the Arlington Youth Counseling Center



**ROBBINS MEMORIAL TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM  
730 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476**

December 10, 2018

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the application given by the Department of Health and Human Services to the CPA Committee. Their proposal is seeking funding to rehabilitate the Whittemore Robbins Cottage.

This structure has long been neglected and has resulted in serious damage that puts the future of the building at risk.

The Cottage is one of three buildings in this complex - the Whittemore Robbins House itself and the Carriage House. They represent a very unusual grouping of original, historical buildings in the center of Arlington.

Since 1997 the Whittemore Robbins House and its grounds have been rental facilities for special events - weddings, bar/bat mitzvah's, showers, retirement parties. The facility has become well known in the greater Boston area as a unique, special place for special parties. This endeavor has brought to the town considerable income which has been used to subsidize the expenses of the house itself.

Beyond the rehabilitation project that is being proposed, the long term plans for the Cottage include adding additional counseling offices for the Arlington Youth Counseling Center and including restrooms that can be used by the events to be held in the Carriage House and Garden. Both of these uses will benefit Arlington greatly.

This is a very important historic building in a very unique historic town center. I very much hope that CPA funds will be available to support this building in need of much care.

Sincerely,

*Patsy Kraemer*

Patsy Kraemer  
Event Coordinator  
Town of Arlington

## **Attachment 3. MacLeod Consulting Report**

MacLeod Consulting, Inc.

29 Woods Road

Belmont, MA 02478

(617) 484-4733

fax (617) 484-9708

[www.macleod-consulting.com](http://www.macleod-consulting.com)

September 22, 2017

Ms. Christine Bongiorno

Director, Human & Health Services

Town of Arlington

27 Maple Street Senior Center

Arlington, MA 02476

Re: Whittemore Robbins Cottage  
Structural Engineering Services

Dear Christine:

At your request, I surveyed the structural condition of the Whittemore Robbins Cottage at 670R Massachusetts Avenue. The purpose of this assessment is to identify structural liabilities and capacities in this structure before undertaking a gut rehabilitation. The property is located within the Arlington Center Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Introduction**

Rehabilitation projects with historic structures generally require the exterior to retain its original historic fabric and appearance. Unless there are significant historic features within the building, property owners are usually free to renovate as they desire. All work must meet the Massachusetts State Building Code which at this time is based upon International Residential Code (IRC). Alternatively, the structural work is allowed to meet the International Building Code (IBC2009) and the International Existing Building Code (IEBC2009) along with Massachusetts Amendments.

This assessment includes a set of architectural drawings, A1 to A5, showing floor plans and exterior elevations and a set of structural drawings, S1 to S3, showing floor framing plans. The architectural drawings are provided to help locate walls and openings within the structure. These sheets include annotations in red that point to items in this report listing liabilities. In reviewing the structural capacity of framing members, the following code loads were assumed: snow at 40 psf, wind based on 100 mph winds, and residential live load of 40 psf. The 40 psf for common areas was used throughout even where 30 psf for sleeping areas would have sufficed, because locating future sleeping areas is only a guess. The 40 psf assures any arrangement of sleeping and non-sleeping layouts for proposed renovations. Spruce-Pine-Fir design stresses for Select Structural grade were used in analyses.

The architectural drawings are based upon approximated measurements and sketches made by SPYRE Designworks dated June 11, 2014. They are intended to document the existing layout only. The structural drawings indicate existing member placement and sizes that were observed during the survey.

### **Evaluation**

The Whittemore Robbins Cottage is built with a layout, framing members, materials, and joinery typical of the mid to late 1800's. The basement walls are rubble stone. The basement

was dry during the survey; however, rubble has little capacity to prevent moisture seeping through. The walls are framed with wood studs. On the interior faces they are finished with wood lath and plaster. The exposed wood in the basement appears mostly as rough spruce. Most of the joints are nailed to supports, even those with notches. This argues for late 1800's construction.

### ***General capacities***

The four-inch wall studs are adequate for a two-story building. The floor joists are adequate for modern residential loading. The roof rafters are adequate for modern code snow loading. The floor beams except those listed below are adequate for modern residential loading. The structure has sufficient walls to brace against wind loading.

### ***Liabilities***

1. Chimney supported beams (See sheets S1 & S2). The one chimney is located between the main block of the cottage and the ell. At the first, second, and attic levels a pair of wood beams frame into the chimney. It has been a long-standing code requirement to have a two-inch space between framing and chimneys. The one exception is a qualified chimney liner which permits framing to touch the outside face of the chimney. In this case, the framing is embedded into the chimney, a violation. The support of floor framing at the chimney needs to be reconfigured to isolate the chimney from the framing. The solution will require careful coordination with proposed walls to provide a rational load path up and down the structure.
2. Undersized 1<sup>st</sup> floor beam (See Sheet S1). The 6x6 beam spanning east-west and supported on the 12-inch square brick column has 72.5 percent of the required capacity. It needs strengthening.
3. Undersized post (See Sheet S2). The 4x4 wood post over the 12-inch square brick column has 80 percent of the required capacity. Replace it with a stronger wood post.
4. Rotted 1<sup>st</sup> floor beam (See Sheet S1). The beam spanning east-west and supported on the north side of the chimney is rotted at the west foundation wall. Replace this span.
5. Anomalous joist framing (See Sheet S1). At the north end of the first floor, the first-floor framing appears to be infill framing as though this may have been a former stair opening. The purpose is not clear. Remove this framing and replace with joists comparable to those on either side.
6. Shore by chimney (See Sheet S1). Remove this shore after the floor is resupported and isolated from the chimney.
7. Vestibule settlement (See Sheet S1). The vestibule has settled about two inches. Most likely the present piers were terminated above the basement excavation cut line. Replace the existing piers with round concrete piers carried down to undisturbed soil at least four feet below grade.
8. Rafter ties (See Sheet S3). The rafters span east-west.
  - a. At the high roof, the attic joists span north-south. This arrangement fails to tie the bottoms of the rafters together to resist thrust at the eave line. This can be resolved by either adding ties at the eave line across the attic joists or by adding a ridge beam directly under the present ridge board.
  - b. At the low roof, the rafters bear upon knee walls. These cannot be tied to resist thrust. The thrust can be resolved by adding a ridge beam under the ridge board.

9. Cross walls (See Sheets A1 & A2). Cross walls are usually interior non-bearing walls that serve to separate spaces into rooms. They provide an additional structural benefit in stiffening a building against lateral forces from wind or earthquakes. I've identified two walls, one north-south and the other east-west that should be kept in any proposed renovation. The modern tendency is to remove walls to open up interior spaces. The lengths of cross walls to remain can be reduced following a structural analysis to determine effective lengths. These walls should generally stack from the first level floor to the second level ceiling.
10. Chimney. The chimney has some cracks in it. These can be seen in the basement. There are likely more hidden behind finishes in the first and second floor stories. These should be rebuilt. Add a chimney liner meeting UL1777 (IRC-R1003.18).
11. Contingency. The design team should carry a structural contingency in two parts. One, is a design contingency until the structure can be resurveyed and confirmed following a gut demolition. Two, is a contingency to allow for discovery of hidden deficiencies such as missing, broken or rotted components.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Historic***

The design team should review Owner needs with the Historical Commission authorities to understand preservation requirements and opportunities the Town seeks in rehabilitating this building. I expect a balance where the exterior keeps its original appearance and the interior is refitted for modern use as the most likely outcome. A gut rehabilitation will allow for reusing much of the existing framing.

### ***Structural***

The aforementioned liabilities will require resolving. Some can be optimized in the architectural layout such as isolating the chimney from framing. Others simply need a direct repair.

### ***Cost***

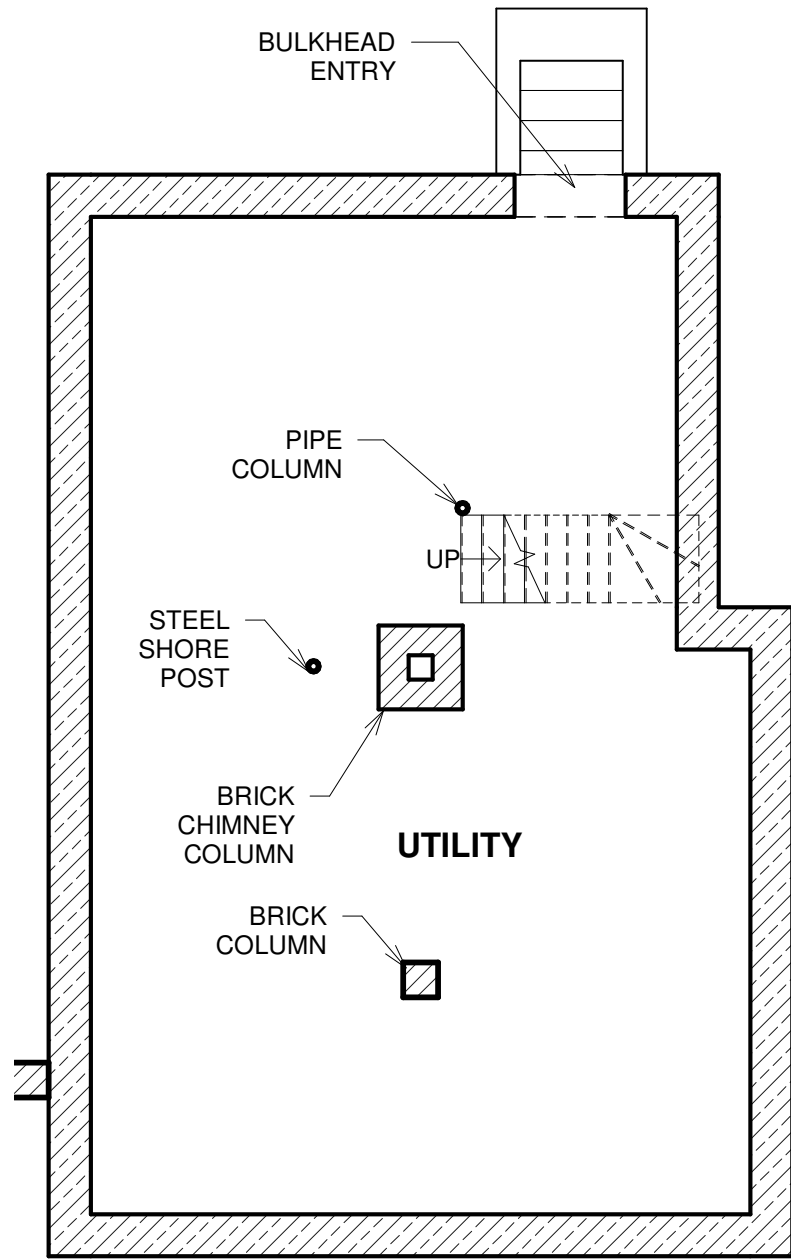
Given the myriad number of ways a rehabilitation may affect architectural layout, an enumerated structural cost now is futile. When making a budget for a proposed rehabilitation, the design team can apply a square foot estimate cost for similar projects. Add to that correcting the listed deficiencies. Complete the structural budget by adding contingencies for design and hidden conditions.

Sincerely,

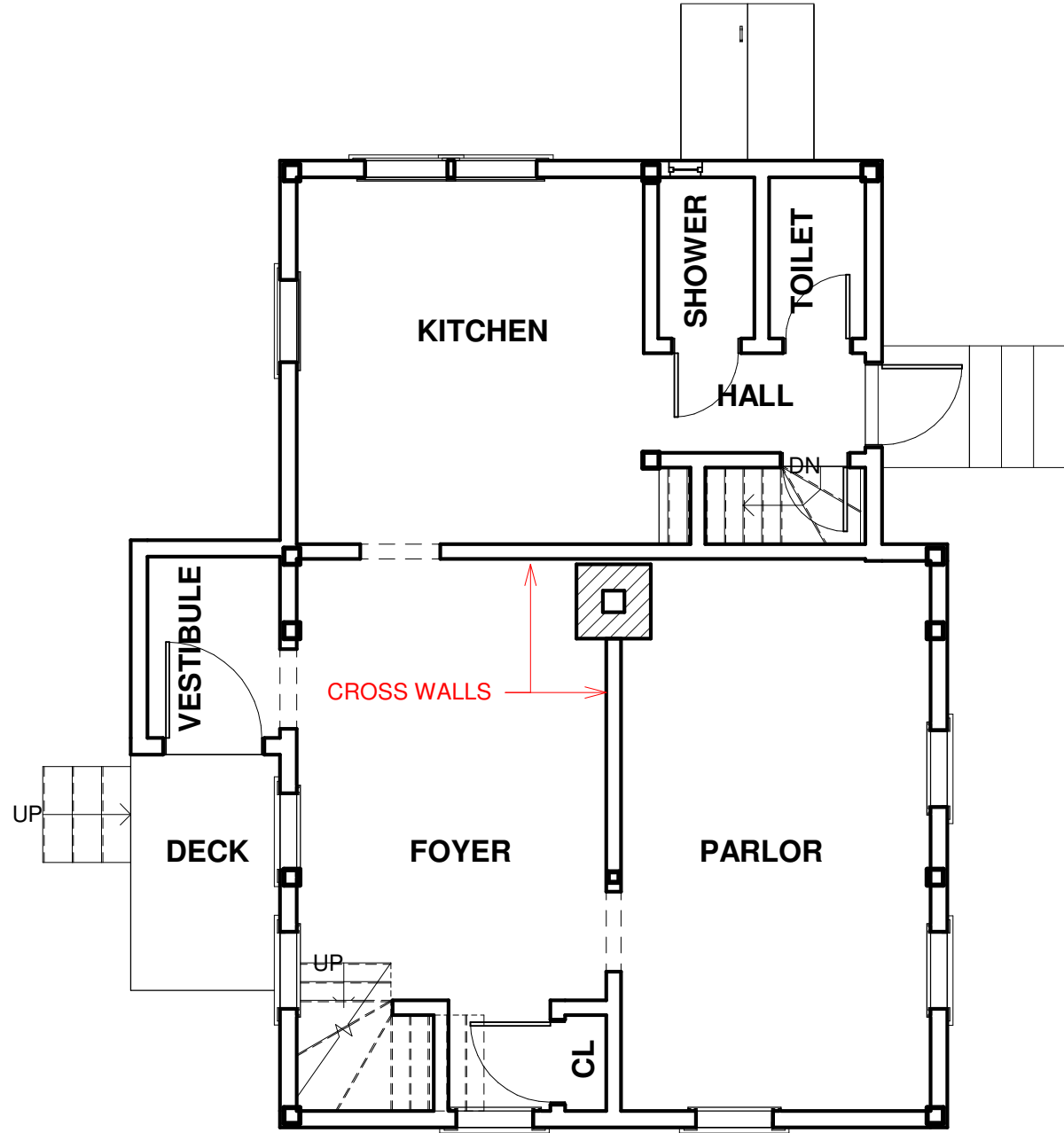


Arthur H. MacLeod, P.E., Principal  
MacLeod Consulting, Inc.

Attachments: Drawing Sheets A1 to A5 and S1 to S3



**A** BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN  
3/16" = 1'-0"

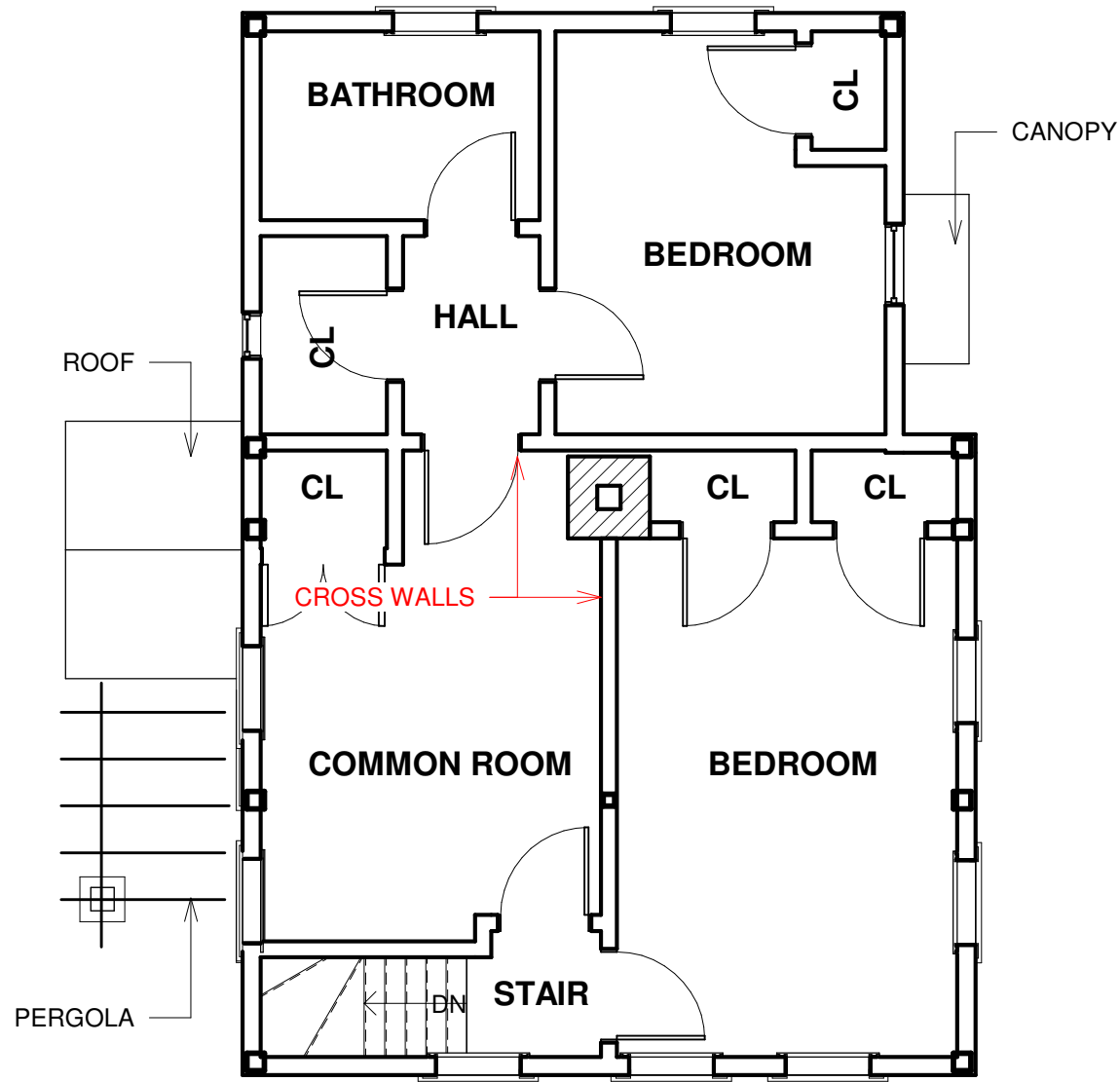


**B** FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
3/16" = 1'-0"



<b>MacLeod Consulting, Inc.</b> 29 Woods Road Belmont, MA 02478 <i>structural engineering</i>	CLIENT Arlington Human & Health Services 27 Maple St. Senior Center Arlington, MA 02476		SHEET TITLE <b>BASEMENT &amp; FIRST FLOOR PLANS</b>	
	PROJECT NO: 2016.21 DATE: 09/18/17 FILE: DRAWN BY: AHM DESD BY: AHM	No. _____ Date _____	PROJECT <b>Whittemore Robbins Cottage Structural Study</b> 670R Massachusetts Ave Arlington, MA 02476	
				DRAWING <b>A1</b>

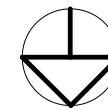




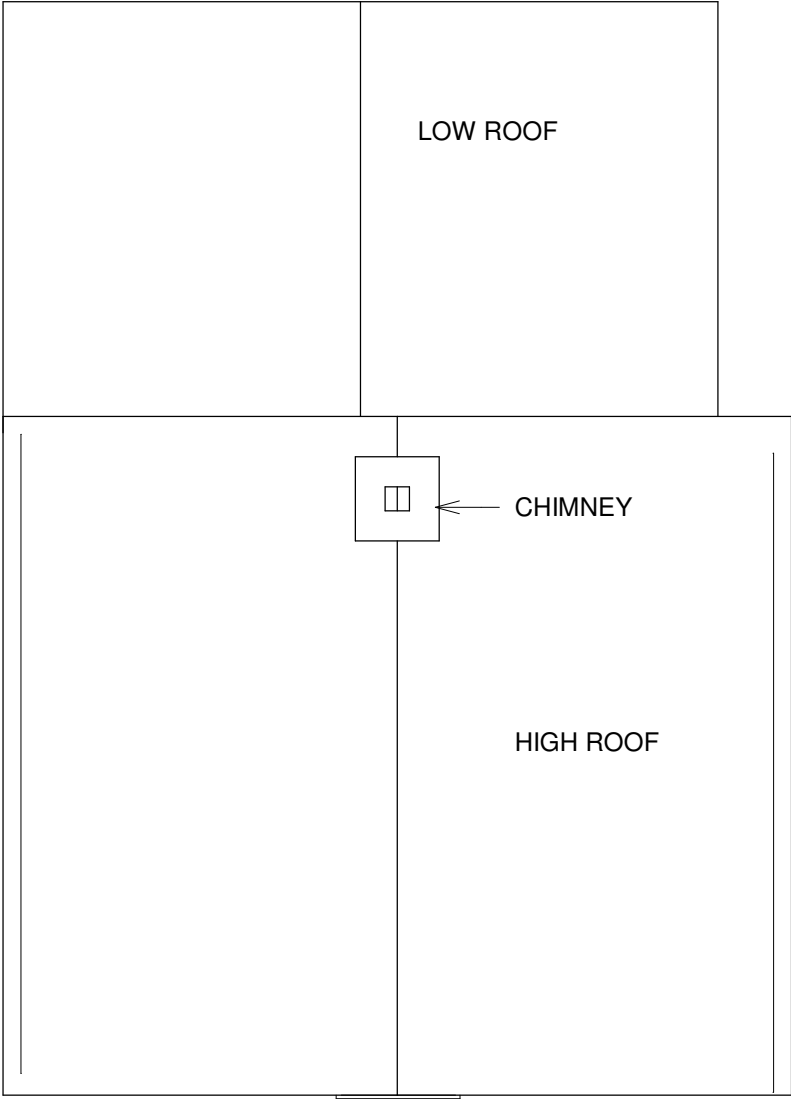
**(C) SECOND FLOOR PLAN**  
3/16" = 1'-0"



**(D) ATTIC FLOOR PLAN**  
3/16" = 1'-0"



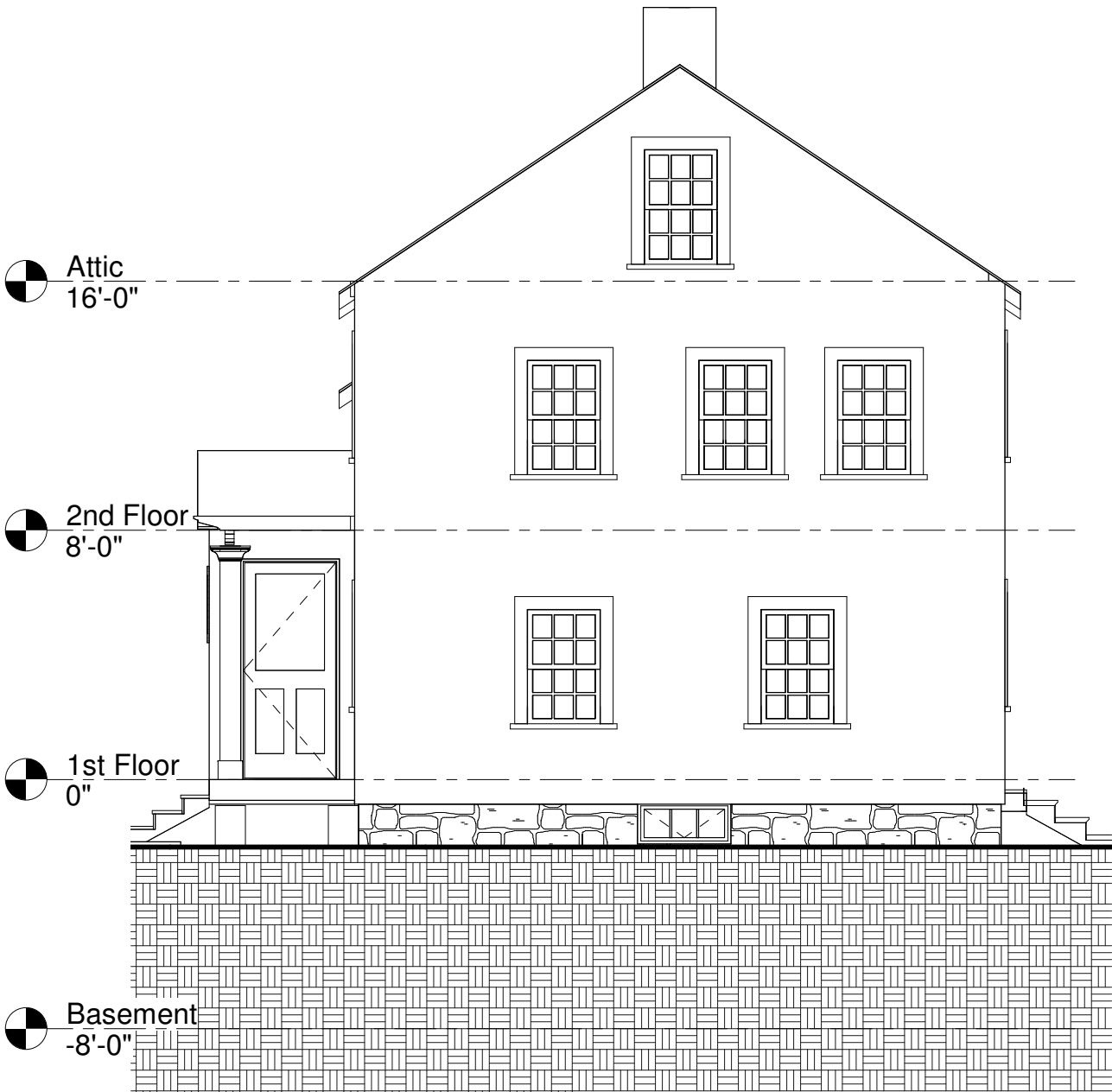
<div>MacLeod Consulting, Inc. 29 Woods Road Belmont, MA 02478 <i>structural engineering</i></div>		<div>CLIENT Arlington Human &amp; Health Services 27 Maple St. Senior Center Arlington, MA 02476</div>		<div>SHEET TITLE SECOND FLOOR AND ATTIC PLANS</div> <div>PROJECT Whittemore Robbins Cottage Structural Study</div> <div>670R Massachusetts Ave Arlington, MA 02476</div> <div>DRAWING A2</div>
		<div>No.      Date</div>		
PROJECT NO: 2016.21				
DATE: 09/18/17				
FILE:				
DRAWN BY: AHM				
DES'D BY: AHM				



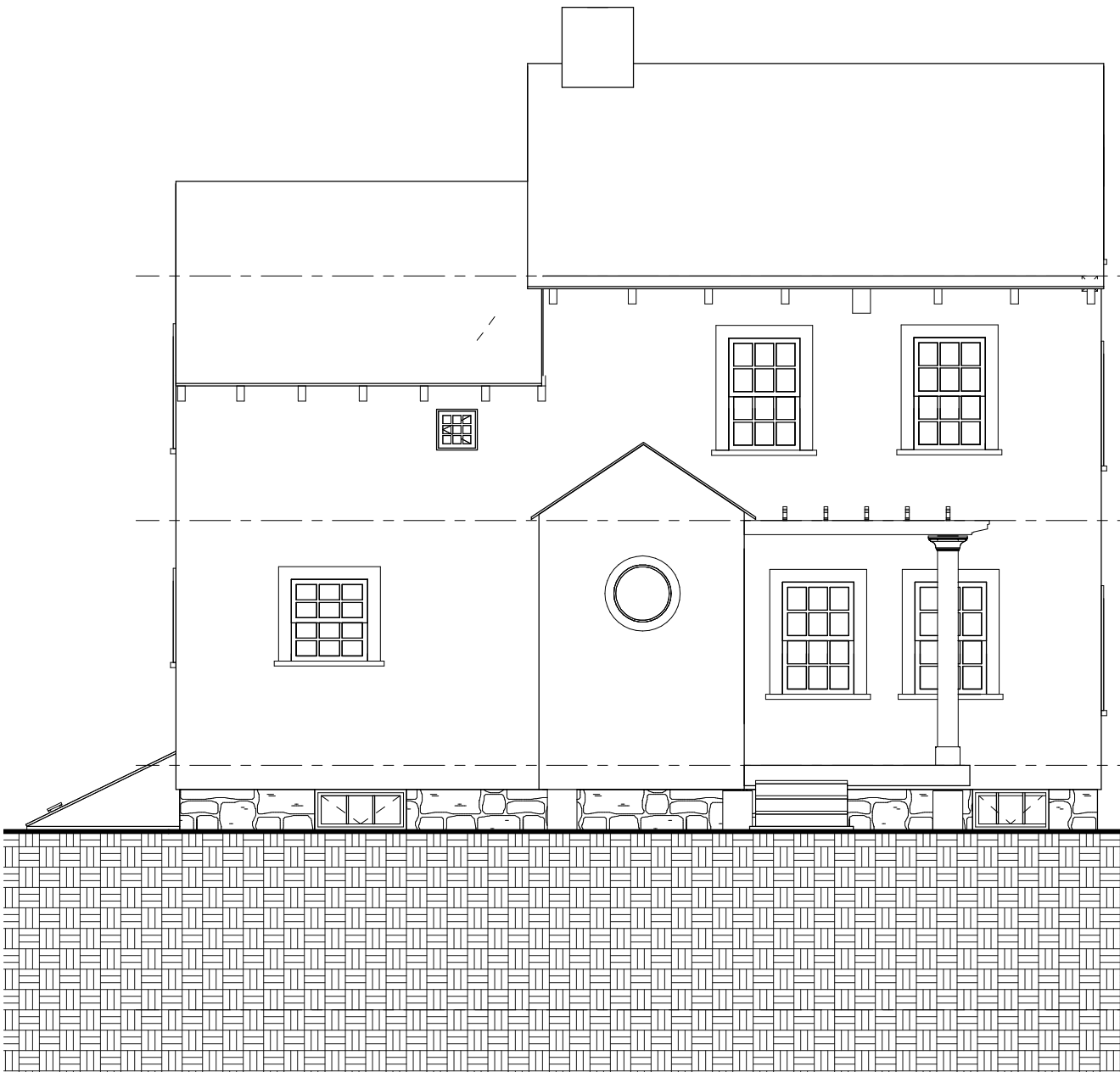
E ROOF PLAN  
3/16" = 1'-0"



MacLeod Consulting, Inc. 29 Woods Road Belmont, MA 02478  structural engineering	CLIENT		SHEET TITLE	
	Arlington Human & Health Services 27 Maple St. Senior Center Arlington, MA 02476		ROOF PLAN	
	No.	Date	PROJECT	
PROJECT NO: 2016.21			Whittemore Robbins Cottage Structural Study	
DATE: 09/18/17			670R Massachusetts Ave Arlington, MA 02476	
FILE:			DRAWING	
DRAWN BY: AHM			A3	
DES'D BY: AHM				



1 North Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"



2 East Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"

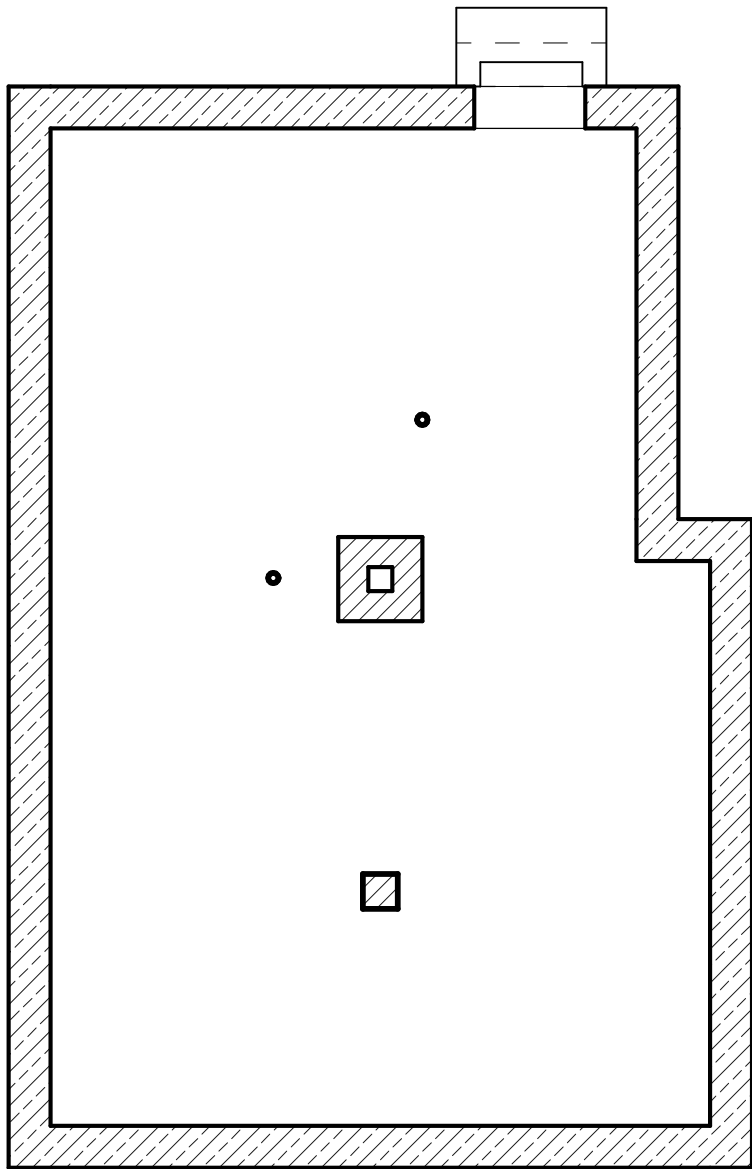
SHEET TITLE NORTH & EAST ELEVATIONS		PROJECT Whittemore Robbins Cottage Structural Study		DRAWING A4	
CLIENT Arlington Human & Health Services 27 Maple St. Senior Center Arlington, MA 02476					
MacLeod Consulting, Inc. 29 Woods Road Belmont, MA 02478  structural engineering		No.		Date	
PROJECT NO: 2016.21					
DATE: 09/18/17					
FILE:					
DRAWN BY: AHM					
DES'D BY: AHM					



1 South Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"

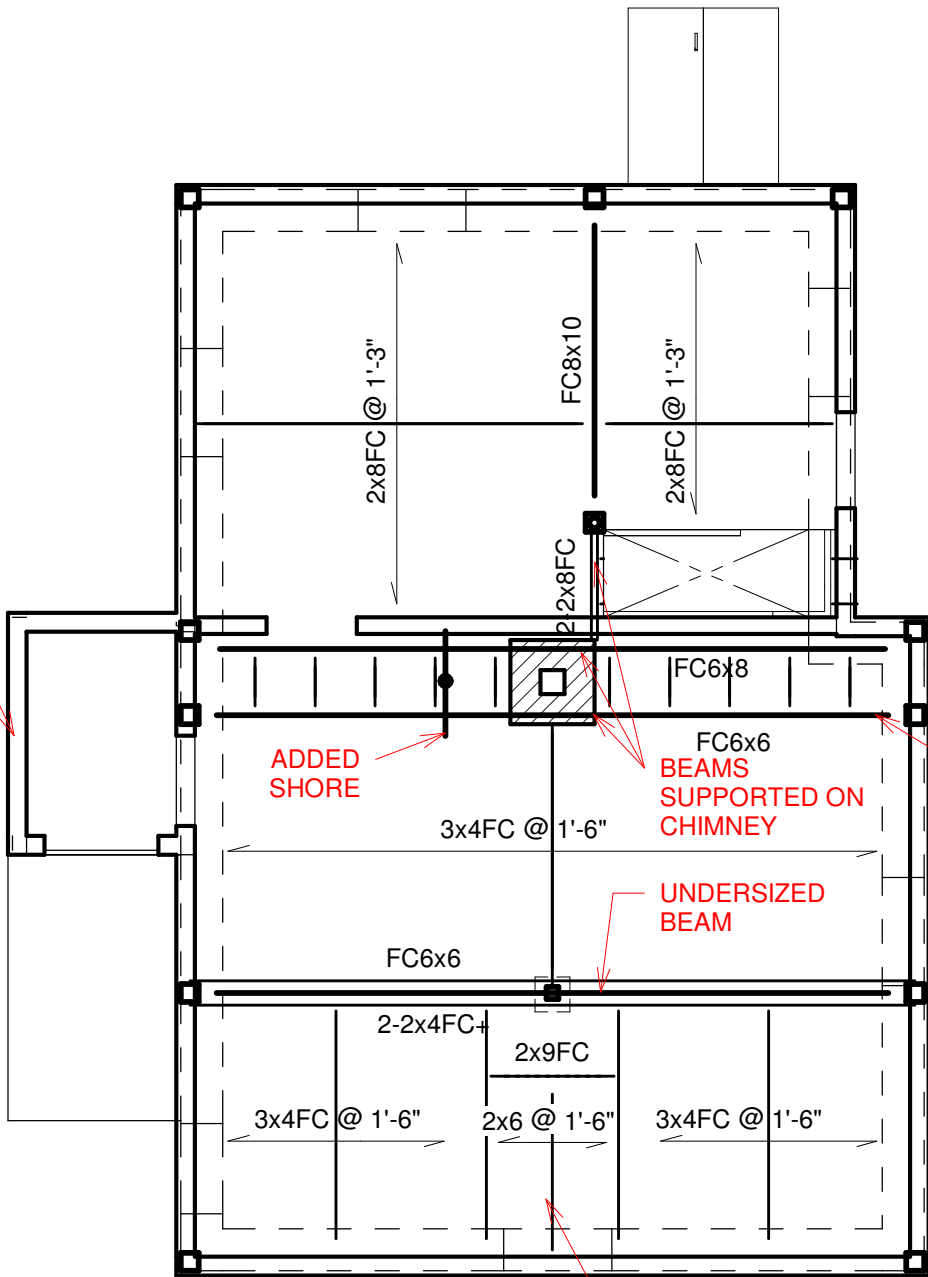
2 West Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"

MacLeod Consulting, Inc. 29 Woods Road Belmont, MA 02478 <i>structural engineering</i>		CLIENT Arlington Human & Health Services 27 Maple St. Senior Center Arlington, MA 02476			SHEET TITLE <b>SOUTH &amp; WEST ELEVATIONS</b>
PROJECT NO: 2016.21		No.			
DATE: 09/18/17		Date			
FILE:					
DRAWN BY: AHM					
DES'D BY: AHM					
PROJECT <b>Whittemore Robbins Cottage Structural Study</b>				DRAWING <b>A5</b>	
670R Massachusetts Ave Arlington, MA 02476					

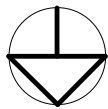


1 FOUNDATION PLAN  
3/16" = 1'-0"

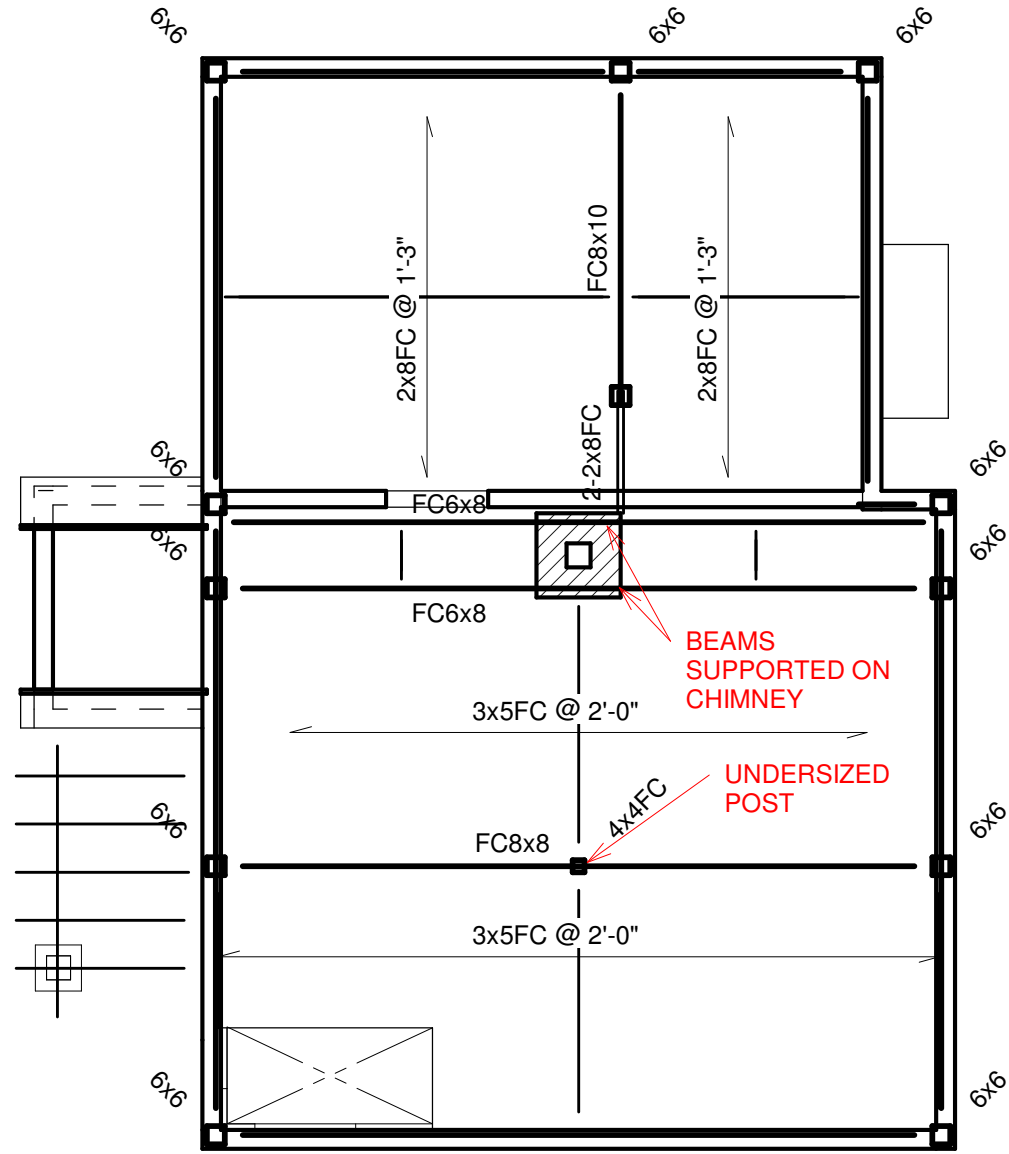
2"± SETTLEMENT



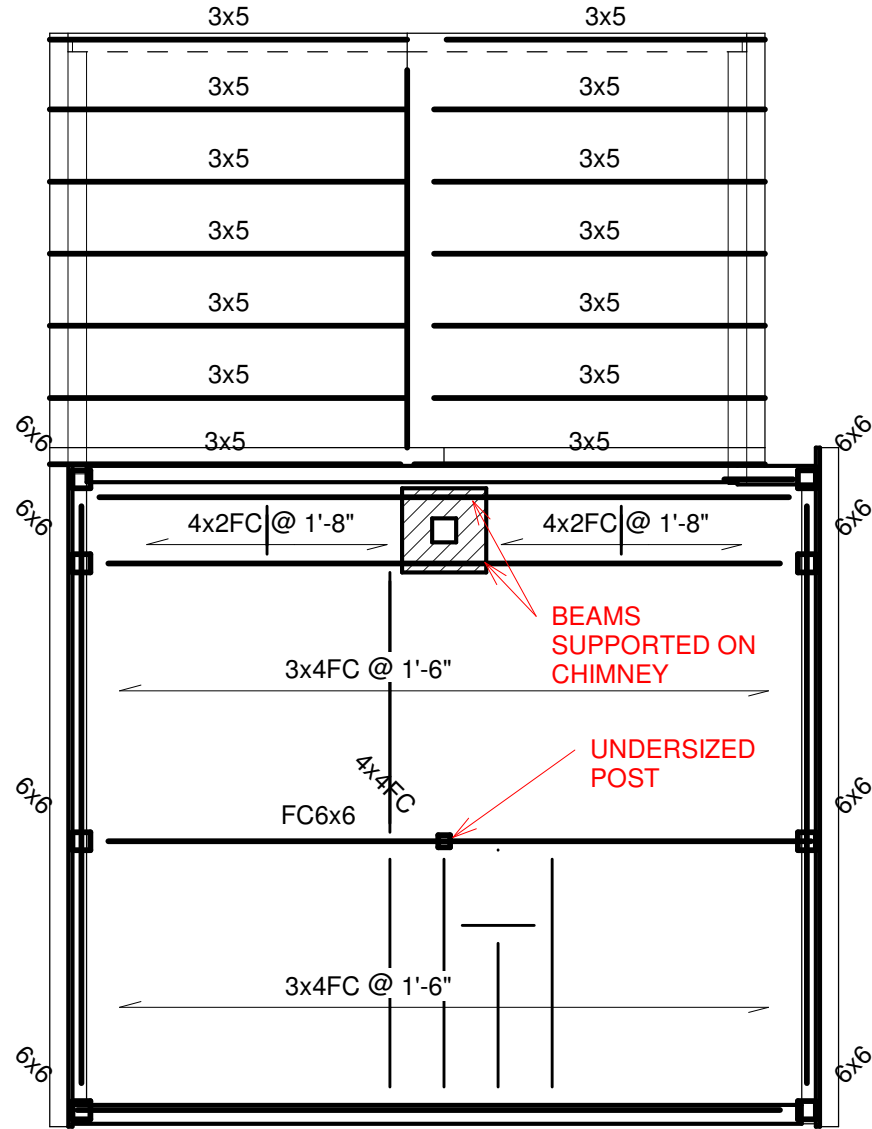
2 FIRST FLOOR FRAMING PLAN  
3/16" = 1'-0"



MacLeod Consulting, Inc. 29 Woods Road Belmont, MA 02478 <i>structural engineering</i>	CLIENT Arlington Human & Health Services 27 Maple St. Senior Center Arlington, MA 02476		SHEET TITLE FOUNDATION & FIRST FLOOR FRAMING PLANS	
	PROJECT Whittemore Robbins Cottage Structural Study	PROJECT 670R Massachusetts Ave Arlington, MA 02476		DRAWING S1
PROJECT NO: 2016.21	No.	Date		
DATE: 09/18/17				
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DRAWN BY: AHM				
DES'D BY: AHM				



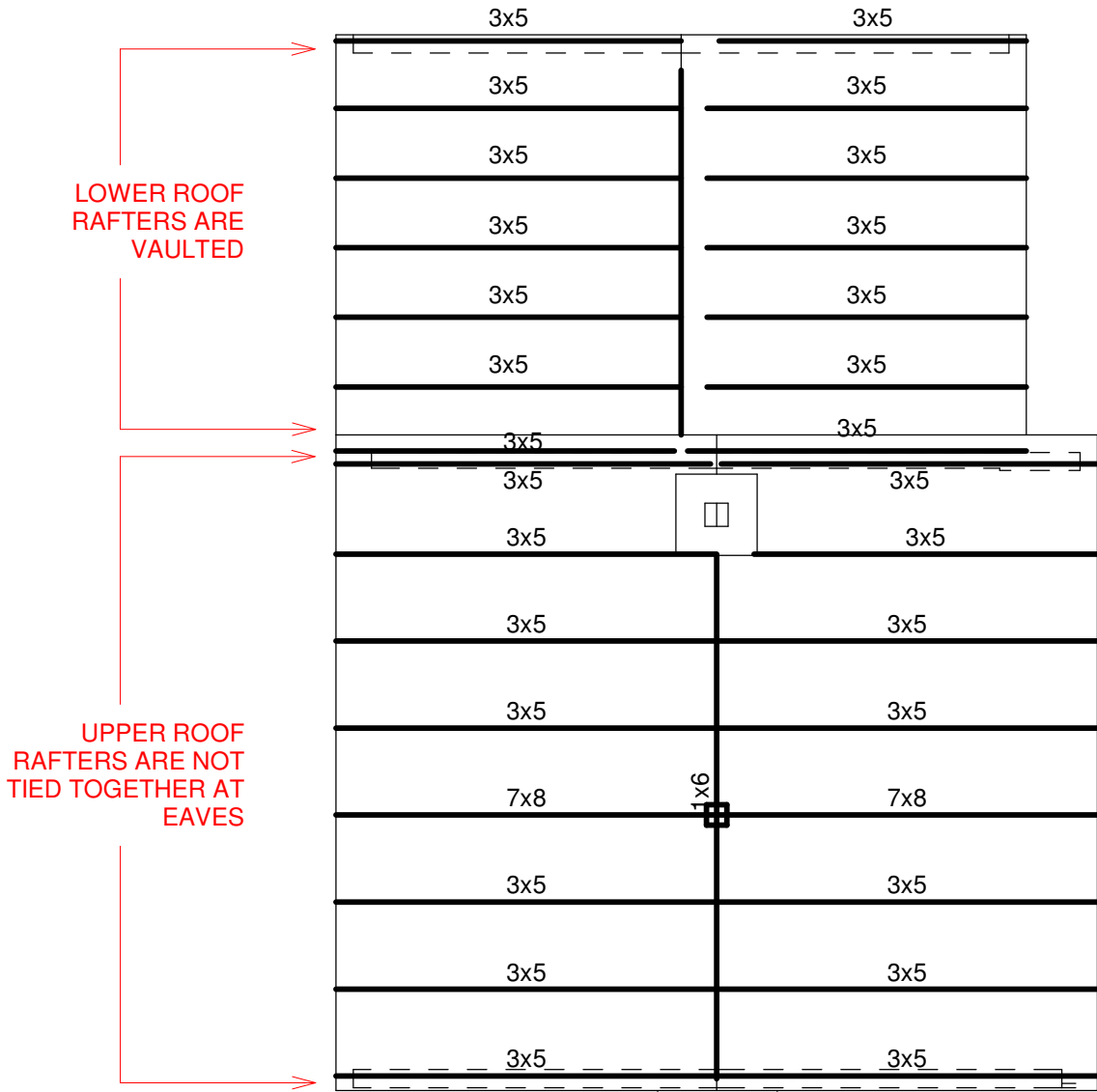
1 SECOND FLOOR FRAMING  
3/16" = 1'-0"



2 ATTIC FLOOR FRAMING  
3/16" = 1'-0"



<div>MacLeod Consulting, Inc.</div> <div>29 Woods Road</div> <div>Belmont, MA 02478</div> <div><i>structural engineering</i></div>	<div>CLIENT</div> <div>Arlington Human &amp; Health Services</div> <div>27 Maple St. Senior Center</div> <div>Arlington, MA 02476</div>		<div>SHEET TITLE</div> <div>SECOND FLOOR &amp; ATTIC FRAMING PLANS</div>	
	PROJECT NO: 2016.21	<div>PROJECT</div> <div>Whittemore Robbins Cottage Structural Study</div> <div>670R Massachusetts Ave</div> <div>Arlington, MA 02476</div>		<div>DRAWING</div> <div>S2</div>
	DATE: 09/18/17			
	FILE:			
DRAWN BY: AHM				
DES'D BY: AHM				



1 ROOF FRAMING PLAN  
3/16" = 1'-0"



MacLeod Consulting, Inc. 29 Woods Road Belmont, MA 02478  <i>structural engineering</i>		CLIENT Arlington Human & Health Services 27 Maple St. Senior Center Arlington, MA 02476		SHEET TITLE ROOF FRAMING PLAN	
		No.	Date		
PROJECT NO: 2016.21					
DATE: 09/18/17					
FILE:					
DRAWN BY: AHM				670R Massachusetts Ave Arlington, MA 02476	DRAWING S3
DES'D BY: AHM					



## **Attachment 4. Photos of current condition of building**



**1. View of Cottage from  
parking lot**



**2. Close up photo of  
window**



**3. View of east entrance  
from parking lot**



**4. View of back of building**



**5. View of west entrance from parking lot**

## **Attachment 5. Photo of completed Carriage House 2017**



**Photo of the Whittemore Robbins Carriage House immediately after CPA project completion in 2017. This image depicts the first town owned properties to go through rehabilitation utilization CPA funding.**